4. The price of cotton is being helped to keep steady for exports of surplus varieties and imports of those varieties likely to be in short supply.

Setting up of a steel plant at Manohar Pur in Bihar

297. SHRI SURAJ PRASAD:

SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Bihar has given a proposal for setting up a steel plant at Manohar Pur out of its own resources;

(b whether the Central)Government propose to include it in the Seventh Five Year Plan period; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI K. C. PANT): (a) References have been received from time the Government of Bihar from time to time since 1981 about the establishment of a new steel plant based on the iron ore deposits in Chiriya, District Singbhum.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Income-Tax assessees

298. DR. MOHD. HASHIM KIDWAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total number of income tax assessees during the years 1983-84 and 1985-86;

(b) what is the total number of tax evaders during the above period; and

(c) what is the number of raids carried out by the Income-tax Department in the country during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) to (d) number of income-tax assessees in various years is as under:

Financial Year	No. of assessees
1983-84	4929559
1984-85	4934543
1985-86 (upto July, 1985) .	5180959

(b) and (c) On the basis of enquiries made and/or other information available with them, the competent incometax authorities carry out survey and search operations to unearth tax evasion from time to time. The number of search operations carried out during various years is as under:

Financial Year	No of searches conducted
1983-84	4332
1984-85	4345
1985-86 (upto October, 1985) .	3851

Balance of trade and payment position

299. DR. MOHD. HASHIM KIDWAI:

SHRI SURAJ PRASAD:

SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of the actual balance of trade and payment position for the current year;

(b) what steps Government propose to take to reduce the gap; and

(c) what additional steps Government propose take to increase the exports so as to reduce the gap?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) The balance of trade position of India's foreign trade for the first 4 months of the current financial year (April-July, 1985) for which provisional data are available is as below:-

(Value in Rs. crores)

	April-July, 1985 (Provisional)
Exports	2942.04
Imports	6021.12
Balance of trade	3079.08

The statistics on the balance of payments are available only upto 1982-83 for the full year. However, the general trend in the balance of pament situation can *inter-alia* also be gauged from the movement in the foreign exchange reserves. The latest data on reserves (excluding gold and SDRs) relates to the week ended 1st November, 1985 when it stood at Rs. 6788.61 crores as against 6816.76 cores on 31st March, 1985.

(b) and (c) Policy measures are being continuously evolved for increasing India's exports. These include measures for increasing and diversifying the production, making our exports more competitive, finding new markets for our products and processing commodities for 'nighr value realisation. Efforts would be made to gear up these measures further during the Seventh Plan period.

The current import-export policy which will be operative for a 3 year period, 1985-88, is designed to introduce an environment of continuity and stability in trade policies. It aims at providing a major thrust towards increased production, both for domestic consumption and exports, and to bring about efficient import substitution. The Government have also decided to select thrust sectors for export promotion which would make a substantial contribution to growth in exports over the medium terms. Public Sector Undertakings are being involved for greater participation in export efforts. Simultaneous efforts are also being made to step up our indigenous production of importables during the Seventh Five Year Plan period, particularly in the sphere of bulk imports.

Safety measures in factories

300. DR. MOHD. HASHIM KIDWAI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state what fresh steps have been taken by Government to improve safety measures in the factories and how these have proved effective?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI T. ANJAIAH): Central Government had advised the State Government to strengthen the factory inspectorate and update the State Factory rules so that the safety provisions under the Factories Act, 1984 are effectively enforced. Selected State Factory Inspectors have also been given special training on Industrial Hygiene and major hazard control measures. The Factories Act is being reviewed and certain specific provisions are being considered for stringent safety standards in hazardous units.

Compulsorily retirement of Income Tax Commissioners

301. SHRI KAPIL VERMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have prepared a list of Income Tax Commissioners who are to be retired compulsorily as a part of the drive to cleanse the Department; if so, what is their number and by what time they will be retired and whether a list of Income-tax Officers is also being drawn up for their being weeded out;

(b) how many Income Tax Commissioners have retired voluntarily;

(c) what action is contemplated against corrupt Assistant Income Tax Commisioners below the age of 50; and